

REMARKS

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 9, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by NAKAMURA (U.S. Patent 6,476,851). Further, claims 2 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over NAKAMURA. In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 3-6, 8, 11-14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over NAKAMURA in view of SASAKI (U.S. Patent 5,408,265). The Examiner also rejected claims 7 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over NAKAMURA and SASAKI in further view of KIMURA (U.S. Patent No. 4,489,350).

Applicant respectfully traverses each of the above-noted rejections and submits that they are inappropriate with respect to the combination of features recited in each of the claims.

In addition to the previously submitted arguments, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections together with the indication of the allowability of all claims pending herein for at least each of the reasons set forth below.

In particular, Applicant submits that the rejection of the claims is inappropriate at least since NAKAMURA fails to disclose each and every feature, as recited in at least each of the independent claims. For example, NAKAMURA does not disclose, inter alia, a predetermined circuit arranged along the periphery of the light receiving surface of the image sensor, as recited. Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, such features are not illustrated in Figure 15 of NAKAMURA. Rather, Figure 15 merely illustrates providing light guides 72 parallel to the CCD (column 13, lines 53-60). Moreover, Figure 15 does not

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indicate any circuitry as being arranged along the periphery of the CCD. Further, regarding the Examiner's assertion that the predetermined circuit is inherent to NAKAMURA, Applicant respectfully submits that while a circuit might be inherent in the endoscope of NAKAMURA, there is no supporting evidence that a predetermined circuit that receives a signal from the image sensor "is arranged along the periphery of the light receiving surface of the image sensor on the base", as recited in the claims is inherent to NAKAMURA.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that NAKAMURA also fails to disclose or even suggest, inter alia, a predetermined circuit that is arranged on the base, as recited. In this regard, Applicant notes that the Examiner has incorrectly interpreted the glass cover 85 of Figure 18 to be the claimed base. However, in NAKAMURA, there is no circuitry on the glass cover 85. Rather, in Figure 18, NAKAMURA is directed towards providing a second lens unit 83 that is cemented to a glass cover 85. Moreover, Applicant submits that one of ordinary skill in the art, regarding e.g. claim 1, would recognize that the "base" of the present invention refers to e.g. a circuit substrate, a circuit board, and other elements of a similar nature, but does not refer to a glass cover, as taught by NAKAMURA. There is no disclosure in NAKAMURA of either an image sensor or a circuit mounted to the glass cover 85. Rather, the lens 83 is cemented to the glass cover 85 and the CCD is fixed to the lens 83.

Further, Applicant submits that the rejection is also inappropriate at least since NAKAMURA does not anticipate providing a predetermined circuit arranged "so that a center of the base on the light receiving surface of the image sensor is substantially aligned with a center of the effective imaging region of the image sensor", as recited. This feature

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is not disclosed by NAKAMURA. Rather, Figure 18 of NAKAMURA is merely directed towards aligning the second lens unit 83 of the optical axis with the imaging area of the CCD. Further, NAKAMURA makes no mention of any arrangement of a circuit about a periphery of a light receiving surface nor any effective imaging region of the image sensor. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims.

Applicant also submits that the rejection of the claims is inappropriate at least since the Examiner is relying upon the teachings of elements or features taken from multiple embodiments (e.g., the seventh embodiment illustrated in Figure 15 and the eighth embodiment illustrated in Figure 18) of NAKAMURA without providing rationale or suggestion in the references for the proposed combination of elements or features. Thus, for at least this additional reason, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

In addition to the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that the dependent claims are also allowable for the combination of features recited therein. For instance, using claims 3 and 11, as an illustrative example, Applicant submits that the applied references fail to anticipate or render obvious, inter alia, a predetermined circuit that includes a signal processing circuit for carrying out signal processing of a signal outputted from the image sensor and a control circuit for carrying out timing control to extract a signal from the image sensor arranged along the periphery, as recited in the claims.

As admitted by the Examiner, NAKAMURA fails to disclose the above-mentioned features. Thus, the Examiner relies upon SASAKI for supplying the deficiencies of NAKAMURA and asserts that it would be obvious to incorporate SASAKI's teachings of a signal processing circuit and a control circuit for "carrying out image processing and timing control to extract a signal from the image sensor".

However, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of the claims is inappropriate at least since SASAKI also fails to supply the deficiencies of NAKAMURA. In this regard, Applicant submits that SASAKI does not disclose a control circuit that carries out timing control to extract a signal from the image sensor, as recited. Rather, SASAKI discloses that control circuit 44 compares the PAL TV synchronizing signal and resets the first control circuit 38 on the basis of the comparison result (column 9, lines 14-19). Further, SASAKI does not disclose the claimed circuits "arranged", as recited. As all of the claim limitations are not taught or suggested by the applied references, taken alone or in combination, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Further, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's obviousness assertions. More specifically, Applicant submits that NAKAMURA is directed towards an objective lens system that is able to correct distortion and prevent shading. SASAKI, on the other hand, is directed towards synchronizing the frame frequencies of image signals with the frame frequencies of a standard TV system. However, there does not appear to be any suggestion in either NAKAMURA or SASAKI for the combination proposed by the Examiner. That is, NAKAMURA appears to be unconcerned with conforming to TV

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standards, whereas SASAKI appears to be unconcerned with the details of the objective lens.

Further, Applicant submits that the Examiner has not presented a convincing line of reasoning or motivation for why one would mount the signal processing circuit and the timing control circuit for synchronizing frame frequencies, as taught by SASAKI, on the glass cover 85, which the Examiner has interpreted to be the claimed base. Accordingly, as the rejection of the claims is clearly improper, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Thus, in view of the arguments herein, Applicant submits that claims 1 and 9 are in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 2-8 and 10-17, Applicant submits that they are allowable on their own merit, as well as because they depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 or 9, which Applicant has shown to be allowable.

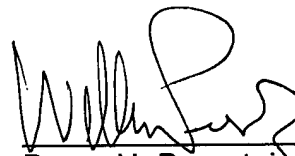
Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references applied by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY

Applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out the shortcomings of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the recited claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Masaaki NAKASHIMA


Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

William Pieprz
Reg. No. 33,630

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1941 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191